

## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Alpena FRO Accomplishment Report

## Aquatic Species Conservation and Management

### Semi-annual report completed for Great Lakes Fishery Trust Sturgeon Project



Assistant Project Leader Tracy Hill submitted a semi-annual progress report for the Great Lakes Fishery Trust. The report summarized progress on Development of a Management Plan for Lake Sturgeon within the Great Lakes based on Population Genetics. This project is targeting the collection of genetic material from spawning lake sturgeon in tributaries to Lakes Superior, Huron, Erie, and Ontario. A total of 52 rivers in these lakes have been identified for sampling. Numerous state, federal, tribal, provincial, and university partners are working on this project. This spring is the last year of sample collection. Samples will be analyzed and a completion report written in 2004.

*Tracy D. Hill*

## Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Management

### Miakonda Boy Scout Camp Dam Removal



The removal of a 5 by 50 foot low head dam on the Ottawa River was completed in February. The dam was located on property of the Erie Shores Boy Scout Miakonda Camp in Toledo Ohio. It was built in the 1930's for purposes unknown to the landowners and neighbors. Volunteers for the Boy Scouts approached Biologist Wells in spring of 2001 seeking assistance with habitat restoration at the Miakonda Camp.

They were particularly interested in removal of the dam on the Ottawa River. The dam was adjacent to a degraded impoundment, Lake Sawyer, but was not involved in water retention. A plan for habitat improvement within the impoundment, restoring riparian wetlands, and restoration of the natural river flow with a boardwalk running through the habitat complex for educational and scout activities was drafted in 2000 by a private environmental organization. In June 2001, Alpena FRO received a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to assist with removal of the Miakonda dam. Partners contributing funds and assistance on this project were the Erie Shores Boy Scout Council, Ottawa River Klean up Association (ORKA), the Ohio Division of Wildlife (ODOW), the USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program and private environmental firms. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant and partner contributions allowed for the complete removal of the dam enabling the Boy Scout Council to concentrate on the rehabilitation of Lake Sawyer and restoration of riparian wetlands.

*Susan Wells*

### **Alpena FRO Partners Program Message Taken to Washington DC**

Alpena FRO Fish and Wildlife Biologist Heather Enterline completed a two-week detail with the Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife (Partners) Program in Arlington, VA on February 7. Ms. Enterline has served as the Partners Program Coordinator for the Alpena FRO since 1999. Duties of the detail included the development of outreach materials for both the Partners and Coastal Programs. On February 4, Enterline provided an overview of 2002 Partners field activities conducted at the Alpena FRO to Fisheries and Habitat Conservation staff. In addition, Enterline was given the opportunity to visit the Chesapeake Bay Field Office to discuss watershed issues with their Coastal Program staff. Enterline was able to attend Secretary Norton's press conference in Washington, D.C. unveiling the 2004 Department of Interior budget.

*Heather Enterline*

## **Cooperation with Native Americans**

### **Executive Council Holds Initial Meeting**

Project Leader McClain and Fishery Biologist Aaron Woldt traveled to Traverse City, MI to attend the February 20 meeting of the Executive Council created under the 2000 Consent Decree. The meeting was the first gathering of the Executive Council since the signing of the Decree in August 2000. On the evening of February 19, Service staff briefed Mr. Hannibal Bolton on agenda items coming before the Executive Council the following day. Bolton was representing Assistant Secretary Craig Manson who is the official agency representative to the body. The Executive Council was established to provide a forum for discussion of policy level issues arising from implementation of the Consent Decree. Although this was the initial meeting of the group, the agenda was brief and most issues brought forward for discussion were easily resolved. The brevity of the agenda and the easy resolution of issues discussed is an excellent indicator that implementation of the Decree is progressing well.



*Jerry McClain*

### **Statistical Catch at Age Models Updated**



Fishery Biologist Aaron Woldt of the Alpena FRO updated lake trout statistical-catch-at-age (SCAA) models for 1836 Treaty waters of Lake Huron. Each year the Modeling Subcommittee (MSC) of the Technical Fisheries Committee (TFC) is charged by the Year 2000 Consent Decree with updating stock assessment models for lake trout and lake whitefish in 1836 Treaty waters and producing safe harvest limits. There are two lake trout SCAA models for 1836 Treaty waters in Lake Huron. The MH-1 (north-western Lake Huron) model includes statistical district MH-1 in US waters and management area 4-1 in adjacent Canadian waters. The MH-2 (north-central Lake Huron) model includes statistical district MH-2 in US waters and management areas 4-2, 4-3, and 4-7 in adjacent Canadian waters. Woldt and Ji He of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources analyzed model output, completed diagnostic tests of the models' performance, and produced preliminary harvest estimates for 2003 for the

state-licensed recreational fishery and the tribal commercial fishery. Woldt and He will present these preliminary model results and harvest limits at the March 10-12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the MSC in Roscommon, MI. Woldt and He will perform additional model diagnostics on the Lake Huron lake trout models, make changes where necessary, and further refine the preliminary harvest limits prior to presenting these limits to the TFC on March 26<sup>th</sup>.

*Aaron Woldt*

## **Partnerships and Accountability**

### **Information provided for EPA's Great Lakes Strategy 2002**

Representing the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem Team's Lake Sturgeon Committee, Assistant Project Leader Tracy Hill provided information to EPA for their Great Lakes Strategy 2002 initiative. The Lake Sturgeon Committee was asked to provide information on Great Lakes Strategy Action #56 which is to coordinate conservation efforts on lake sturgeon in the Great Lakes basin. The purpose for the report was to provide the senior managers of the U.S. Policy Committee with an initial assessment of the Lake Sturgeon Committee's achievements at meeting the goals of the strategy. Hill provided information on the accomplishments of the Lake Sturgeon committee during FY2002.



*Tracy D. Hill*

## **Public Use**

### **Lake Sturgeon Presentation Given to Port Huron Sportsman Club**



Fishery Biologist James Boase traveled to Port Huron, Michigan on 12 February 2003 to attend the Port Huron Sportsman Club meeting. Boase gave a PowerPoint presentation titled "Lake Sturgeon Giants of the Great Lakes". Approximately 90 recreational anglers from Michigan attended the presentation. Following the presentation questions were addressed about current lake sturgeon research in the St. Clair River as well as other sturgeon research in the Great Lakes. The forum was an excellent opportunity for Boase to explain how the Alpena FRO is working with biologists, recreational anglers, and commercial fishers from both Canada and the US in efforts to better understand sturgeon populations throughout the Great lakes. The workshop provided Boase an opportunity to interact with recreational anglers from Michigan.

*Jim Boase*

## Leadership in Science and Technology

### Lake Sturgeon Priority Research and Assessment Needs Data Analyzed

Assistant Project Leader Tracy Hill, with assistance from Fishery Biologist Aaron Woldt, provided an analysis of survey data collected during the Great Lakes Fishery Trust Lake Sturgeon Coordination Meeting held in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan earlier this winter. The information was requested by the Trust's Scientific Advisory Team (SAT) to aid them with development of their 2003 Request For Proposals. Participants were given a survey form and asked to rank Research and Assessment Needs to Restore Lake Sturgeon in the Great Lakes as identified by the Great Lakes Fishery Trust. In addition, the survey

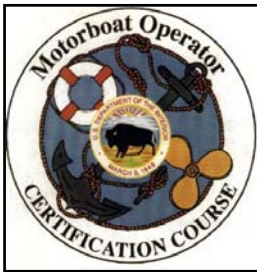


provided participants an opportunity to expand upon previously identified research and assessment needs. The statistical analysis of the data was discussed by the meeting's steering committee and then forwarded on to the SAT. The Trust is expected to announce its 2003 Lake Sturgeon RFP in late March.

*Tracy D. Hill*

## Workforce Management

### MOCC Instructor Coordination Meeting



Fish and Wildlife Biologist Adam Kowalski of the Alpena FRO attended the Motor Boat Operator Certification Course (MOCC) instructor coordination meeting in Green Bay, WI from February 3 to 5, 2003. The purpose of this meeting was to review the new MOCC manual and schedule MOCC classes throughout Region 3 in 2003. Instructors also discussed the refresher course, completion of ARS reports, sending Thank Yous to project leaders, placing expiration dates on MOCC certificates, completing SF 182 forms, proper procedures for reporting accidents, trawling protocols, using the SMIS system, standardizing the MOCC course, and the definition of "open water". Demand for MOCC courses in 2003 is lower than in past years. In 2003, only 14 employees need MOCC training, 8 need MOCC and open water training combined, 22 need the two day MOCC refresher/open water course, and 14 need airboat training. MOCC courses were scheduled as follows: Coraville May 6-8, Twin Cities, MN May 20-22, Onalaska, WI June 3-5, Marquette, MI the first week in May, and Ludington, MI April or May. Open water courses will be in Sturgeon Bay, WI and Alpena, MI. All instructors thought the new MOCC manuals were good but would need more time to thoroughly review them. This was a great opportunity for all MOCC instructors to get together and discuss the needs of the upcoming year to keep Service employees certified to operate watercraft. By ensuring all employees are capable of operating watercraft safely we will be better prepared to complete the operations of the Service.

*Adam Kowalski*

**Alpena Fishery Resources Office on track with Safety Training**

Fishery Biologist, Anjanette Bowen, completed the required OSHA 600 course Collateral Duty Safety Officer training the week of February 24-28 in Dallas, Texas. The training was arranged and paid for by the Service's Region 2. Safety is a critical element in all station operations. The training provided an overview of and access to regulations designed to make the workplace safe and to provide employees with safety training. This certification as Collateral Duty Safety Officer will also allow Bowen to perform annual station safety inspections.

*Anjanette Bowen*

**Computer Support Training**



Administrative Technician, Debra Turner, attended the Computer Support Overview training course conducted at the National Conservation Training Center, February 24 – 26, 2003. This course offered hands-on training in the performance of numerous tasks in the setup, maintenance and use of personal computers. The information taught in this class offered a better understanding of personal computers and provided basic skills needed in troubleshooting, upgrading, and maintaining these computers at the Alpena Fishery Resources Office. As the person in charge of computer support, this training will improve my skills in keeping the office computers running smoothly.

*Debra Turner*